

Factors influencing the flexibility of farming systems

Case study of the Flemish beef farming sector

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CONTEXT

Specialized agriculture is technically optimized and efficient



But suffering ecological, social and economic difficulties

Shift in focus to **resilience** and **adaptive capacity**

WHY FLEXIBILITY?

- Important aspect of a farm's resilience
- Room for change or "degrees of freedom"
- Mostly theoretical knowledge, need for practical knowledge

RESEARCH QUESTION

What factors are influencing a farmer's choice set or flexibility?

METHODOLOGY

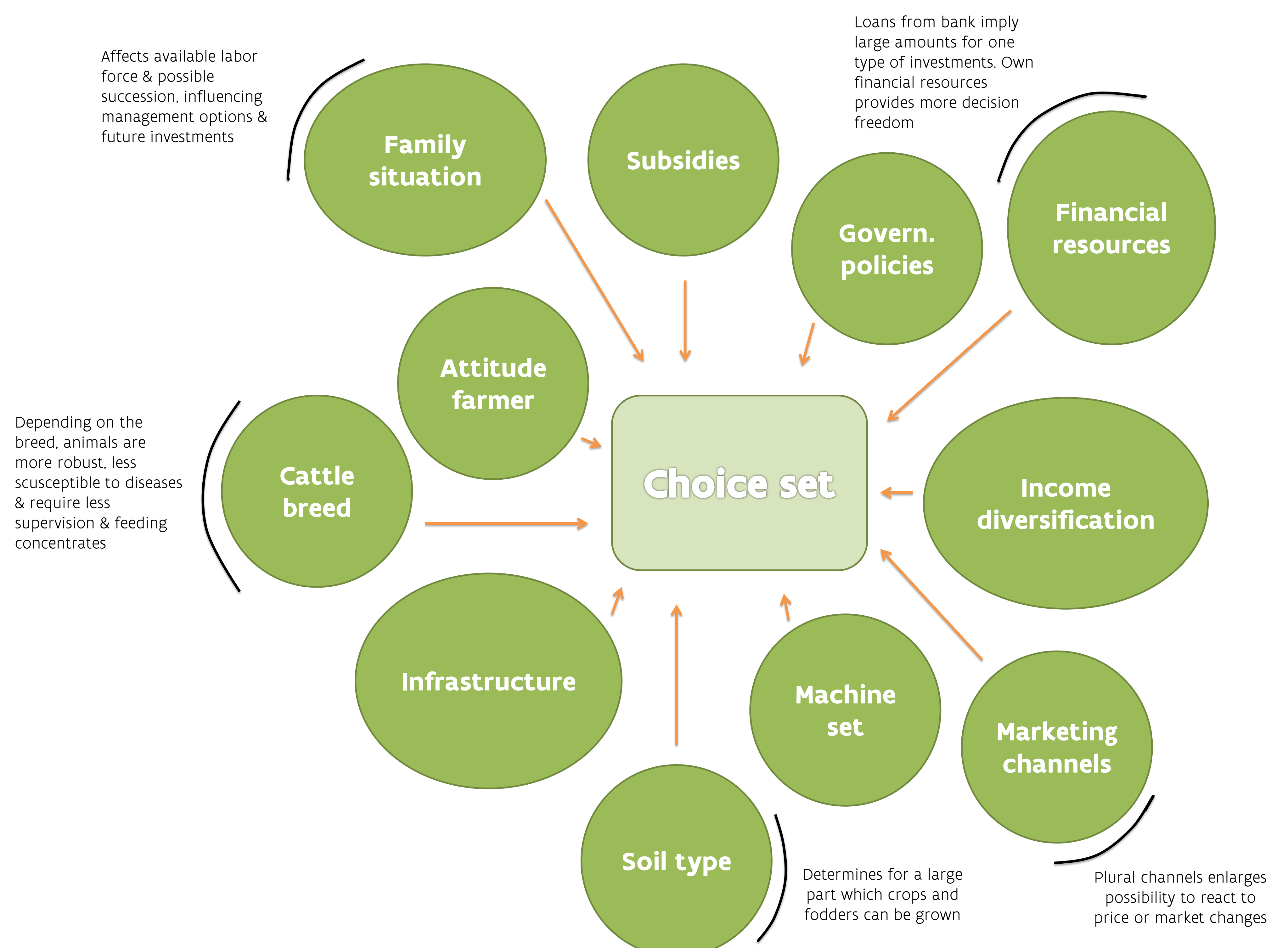
- Literature review
- Semi-structured interviews
- Transcribing & coding

CASE STUDY

Flemish beef farming sector

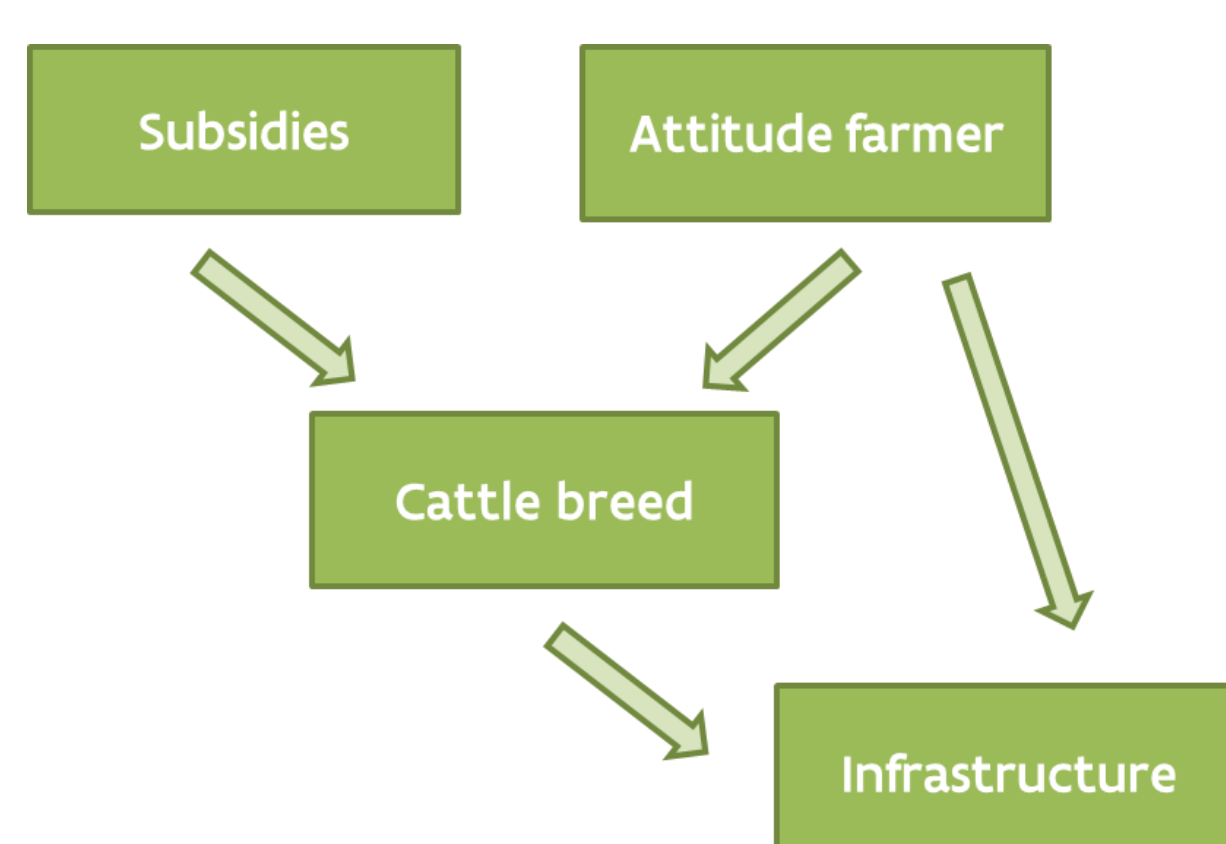
- Heterogenic characteristics
- Diverse range of flexibility strategies

PRELIMINARY RESULTS



DISCUSSION

- Factors are interrelated → analysis through cognitive maps?



- Not straightforward reducing or enhancing resilience → how do farmers deal with these factors?

CONCLUSION / FURTHER RESEARCH

- Interrelated factors → need for systems approach
- Characterization of livestock farming systems by strategies and coping mechanisms

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